

**Statement of Minnesota Association of Community Health Centers  
On US Supreme Court's Decision Upholding the Affordable Care Act**

Minnesota's Community Health Centers (CHCs) are gratified by the Court's decision to uphold the Affordable Care Act (ACA). As providers of care to almost 200,000 patients, of whom 70,000 are uninsured, the decision is welcome news. CHCs are on the front lines, providing medical, dental and behavioral health services to those who would be turned away at many other clinics. They see firsthand the struggle and hardship of patients without health insurance. The Medicaid expansion under the ACA provides an unprecedented opportunity for low-income, uninsured Minnesotans to get the coverage they need.

We are also pleased that ACA funding for expansion of CHCs remains intact. As the Medicaid expansion rolls forward, we expect demand for services at CHCs to sharply increase (as it did in Massachusetts under that state's universal coverage reform). Minnesota's CHCs stand ready to compete for these funds and already have 22 proposals in the works that would cover an additional 70,000 low-income patients. The ACA funding recognizes the 40-year track record of CHCs providing quality, cost-effective primary care to low-income populations. For over 40 years, CHCs have enjoyed strong bipartisan support in that they deliver results in exchange for a well-targeted investment of federal tax dollars. We trust that this track record speaks for itself and will continue to garner strong Congressional support on both sides of the aisle.

While we welcome the Court's decision, much work remains in our state to implement the ACA in ways that will support and strengthen the health care safety net for low-income Minnesotans. Even though many will have insurance coverage for the first time, the fact remains that a vast majority of CHC patients live in poverty. CHCs must have the infrastructure and resources to provide services that enable people to access care, such as patient outreach, language translation, transportation assistance, and nutrition assistance. We will need the support of our elected state and federal officials to insure that CHCs remain a strong, viable component of the safety net as reforms are implemented.

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